

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 3-7, 13-23, 26-30, & 36-46 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 2, 8-12, 24, 25, & 31-35 are pending, with claims 1, 8, 24, and 31 being independent.

Drawing objections

The drawings have been objected to by the Examiner. Proposed drawing corrections, adding text descriptions to the boxes shown in Figures 1 and 5, are attached.

Claim objections

Claims 1-2, 8-12, 24-25, and 31-35 are objected to by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully traverse this objection. With regard to the Examiner's identification of "a test region seek step," that step is not included in the currently pending claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-2, 8-12, 24-25, and 31-35 stand rejected being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,989,195 (Suzuki). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to an optical recording/reproducing method for optically recording or reproducing information with respect to an optical recording medium by using an optical recording apparatus. A management information reproduction step of reproducing management information for managing user information recorded on the optical recording medium with laser light having the reproduction power is conducted before a recording learning step of extracting a recording condition suitable for the optical recording medium. By this method, a user's standby time can be shortened. For example, a learning operation can be conducted while the user is confirming the directory of recorded information or the like in the management information reproduction step. *See, e.g.,* page 25, lines 24-36.

Suzuki does not disclose or suggest at least the above features of claim 1. Suzuki is directed to a disk recording/reproducing system. However, Suzuki does not teach or suggest at least the feature of a management information reproduction step of reproducing management information for managing user information recorded on the optical recording medium with laser light having the reproduction power being conducted before a recording learning step of

discloses, for example, that an intensity of laser light has been set before a reproduction decision (S9 and S10) is made by the user. *See, e.g.*, col. 4, lines 12-16. Thus, a user's interaction is delayed to determine values of the system. *See, e.g.*, Figure 3. The present invention is directed to eliminating or at least minimizing such a delay.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable over the cited reference. In addition, claim 2 depends from claim 1, and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 8 is directed to an optical recording/reproducing method for optically recording or reproducing information with respect to an optical recording medium by using an optical recording apparatus. The method includes a recording possibility identifying step of identifying a possibility of recording information on the optical recording medium, based on a recording identifier. If permission of recording is identified in the recording possibility identifying step, a management information reproduction step of reproducing management information for managing user information recorded on the optical recording medium with laser light having the reproduction power, and then a recording learning step of extracting a recording condition suitable for the optical recording medium are conducted.

Suzuki does not disclose or suggest at least the above features of claim 8. As noted above with respect to claim 1, Suzuki discloses that the intensity of laser light in the drive has been set by the time the reproduction routine is executed. *See, e.g.*, col. 4, lines 12-16. In other words, the user's interaction in the reproduction step (S9) is delayed until the conditions are set (S5). The present invention as recited in claim 8, similarly to claim 1, is directed to eliminating such delay.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 is allowable over the cited reference. In addition, claims 9-12 depend from claim 8, and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons.

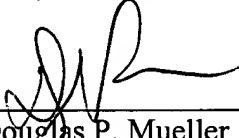
Apparatus claims 24 and 31 track the features of method claims 1 and 8, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 24 and 31 are allowable over the cited reference for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 8. In addition, each of claims 25 and 32-35 depend from one of claims 24 and 31, and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Annotated copy showing changes

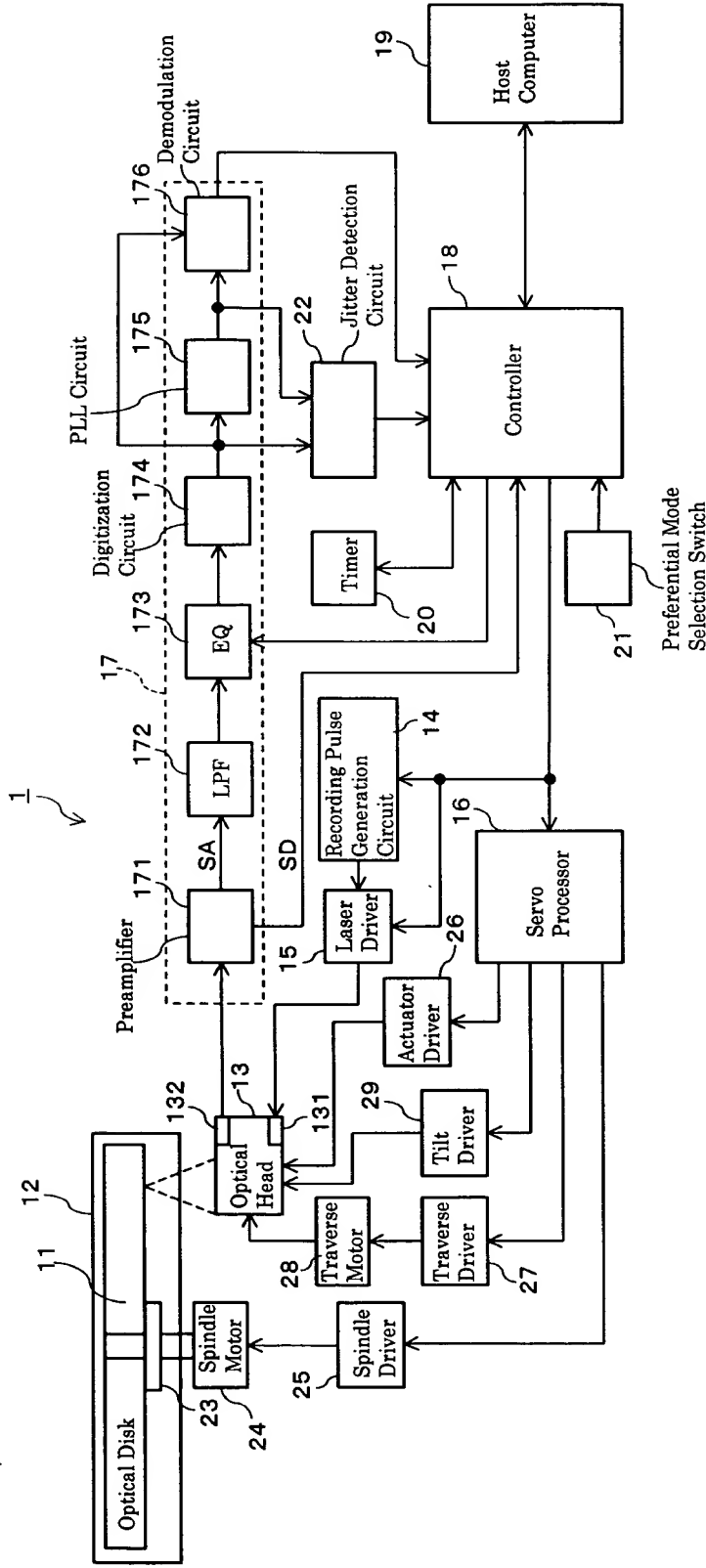


FIG. 1

A circular stamp from the Office of Intellectual Property (OIP). The text "OIP" is at the top, "MAR 08 2004" is in the center, and "PATENT & TRADEMARK" is at the bottom.



FIG. 5